

## NUISANCES, PREDATORS, AND DISEASE

Aside from the U.S. Government, marihuana is virtually disease free. The plant is an extremely hardy weed that develops very few complications. Most complications seem to stem from cultivators overcaring for their plants by giving them too much water (causing stem rot) or fertilizers (burning the roots and leaves). When the soil has poor drainage the water tends to pool around the base of the stem. . . . a problem very common in indoor cultivation. In a few days, the stem will start to turn dark and become soft like a bruised banana. Rid the stem of the pooled water and dry the soil as best as possible. If the condition prevails, treat the plants with any one of a variety of fungicides found at a nursery. When too much fertilizer is applied to the soil the roots will literally burn and the tips of the leaves will become a yellowish brown . . . this fire in the roots can be stopped by a good watering which will flush the fertilizer down through the soil.

When young, the tender succulent plants are susceptible to a large variety of predators . . . dogs, cats, rabbits, cows, deer, gophers, etc. . . that not only enjoy the fine taste but the stony high as well. The fruits of the earth are here for ALL living things to enjoy and share . . . but since it is impossible to explain to an animal about taking only a fair share we must direct our energies to protecting the plants rather than killing off the predators. We have had good luck with encircling the plants or entire crop with inexpensive chicken wire and placing moth balls along the perimeter of the fence . . . this aids in scaring off the burrowing animals such as gophers.

If you are having trouble with insects chewing the leaves and stems . . . have no fear as they are easily eliminated by LADY BUGS and PRAYING MANTISES. These two insects are friends of all plants as they feed on other insects, not plant matter . . . and what a trip . . . getting stoned and watching a praying mantis in action is really fantastic. Many companies breed these insects and your local nursery should be able to provide you with the address of the nearest insect farm. Many companies will air-mail lady bugs and praying mantises guaranteeing live delivery.

One such company is Bio-Control Co., Route 2, Box 2397, Auburn, California 95603 . . . \$3 for ½ pint of lady bugs . . . airmail . . . send for free literature. Spiders will occasionally nest in the branches, but they do not render the plant any harm. They just seem to groove from leaf to leaf, enjoying the stony atmosphere. However, if these spiders prove to be a nuisance, you may want to place a toad or two in your garden . . . toads just love stoned spiders and stoned toads seldom become a nuisance.

At the first sign of trouble, the best thing is to call the local nursery or garden shop and explain the problem. Each area has its own unique plant problem and you might as well plug into what these good people have in their heads. Always tell them you are growing corn, tomatoes, marihuana, whatever, so that they won't recommend anything poisonous. Getting poisoned while trying to get your head together is more than a bummer.

Whenever possible try to use an ORGANIC INSECTICIDE like TRI-EXCEL DS. It is made of the ground flowers of chrysanthemum, the ground roots of rotenone, and the ground stems of ryanici, three natural insecticides which are non-toxic to humans. It can be used as a spray or dust and costs \$1.98 for a one pound can.

In general, marihuana grows freely and develops few complications, especially if the weather is hot and dry. However, weeds and creeping vines such as wild grapes or wild beans will occasionally invade your crop and tend to choke the stalks. These must be uprooted.